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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/657,379	09/08/2000	Gregory James Roger	00167-311002/0231-0187	9095

7590

04/23/2003

JOEL R. PETROW
Smith & Nephew North America
1450 Brooks Road
Memphis, TN 38116

EXAMINER

WILLSE, DAVID H

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3738

DATE MAILED: 04/23/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/657,379

Applicant(s)

ROGER ET AL.

Examiner

Dave Willse

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 March 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 18-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 18-31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees (*In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969)).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application (37 CFR 1.130(b)).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 18-31 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over the claims of U.S. Patent No. 6,235,057. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because each of the features is clearly set forth in one or more claims of the patent.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out

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the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 18, 20, 22, 23, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Kuriwaka, JP 5-300917 A.

Claims 19, 21, 26, 27, and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuriwaka, JP 5-300917 A. The limitations of claim 19 would have been obvious in order to secure the other end of the ligament with the fixation method taught by Kuriwaka.

Claims 24, 28, 30, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuriwaka, JP 5-300917 A, in view of Roger et al., WO 92/03980. To round the upper part of the head of the Kuriwaka fixation screw device so as to create a hemispherical geometry would have been obvious from portion 8 in Figure 3 of Roger et al., with the ordinary practitioner having been motivated by the advantage taught by Roger et al. on page 1, lines 16-18 and 25-29.

The Applicant's remarks have been reviewed. In the Kuriwaka Figure 1 embodiment, for example, the "fixation screw device" (present claim 18, line 5) may be viewed as comprising the outer tubular body 10 *and* the screw shaft 20. Therefore, the insertion step is not complete until the screw shaft 20 is screwed into the outer tubular body 10 such that "it presses radially against and expands the portion of the outer tubular body 10 wherein the slit 11 is formed" (page 8, lines 9-11, of the English translation). Moreover, even the screwing of the tubular body 10 into the open space within the borehole 2 satisfies all of the limitations of instant claim 18, section (c), including pressing the ligament replacement 3 directly and firmly against a sidewall of the hole 2, since otherwise there would be no reaction forces enabling the male screw 12 to *softly bite* "into the bone 1 and the ligament replacement 3 as it is screwed into the borehole 2" so that "the

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end of the ligament replacement 3 is *secured lightly* within the borehole 2" (page 8, last paragraph, of said translation; emphasis added). It may be that such an intermediate state is less firm than the final state of the Applicant's method, but such a distinction is not set forth in the claim. The Applicant mentions some supposed advantages of the present invention over that of Kuriwaka (Paper No. 12: page 3, second paragraph) but fails to provide any specific references to the original disclosure; therefore, the examiner will not evaluate these issues at the present time, especially since 35 U.S.C. 103(a) has not been invoked against claim 18.

Regarding the Declaration under 37 CFR 1.131 received on May 20, 2002, the Applicant's remarks are convincing and the rejections based upon the Hublin document have been withdrawn. *The Applicant should insert the corresponding U.S. patent number 5,383,878 on page 13, line 21, of the instant specification.*

All claims are drawn to the same invention claimed in the application prior to the entry of the submission under 37 CFR 1.114 and could have been finally rejected on the grounds and art of record in the next Office action if they had been entered in the application prior to entry under 37 CFR 1.114. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL** even though it is a first action after the filing of a request for continued examination and the submission under 37 CFR 1.114. See MPEP § 706.07(b). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).


A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period

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will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dave Willse, whose telephone number is (703) 308-2903. The supervisor, Corrine McDermott, can be reached at (703) 308-2111. The receptionist's phone number is (703) 308-0858, and the main FAX numbers are (703) 305-3591, 3590.

dhw: D. Willse
April 18, 2003


DAVE WILLSE
PRIMARY EXAMINER
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